



Strasbourg, 21 September 2009

## Participation of children and young people under the age of 18

### First meeting of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Child and Youth Participation (MJ-S-CYP) and Round Table discussion

#### Concept paper

#### MAIN ISSUES:

- Organising the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Child and Youth Participation (MJ-S-CYP) and setting the structures to implement the Terms of Reference of the Group<sup>1</sup>
- Promoting and developing the Council of Europe actions on child and youth participation by organising a round table discussion with all relevant stakeholders

#### Background:

Child participation is one of the three thematical pillars featuring in the 2009 - 2011 Stockholm Strategy for the programme Building a Europe for and with children<sup>2</sup>. The objectives outlined in the Strategy are the following:

- Support of sustainable and meaningful participation at local, national and international level, notably through:
  - Integrating child participation in the various policy areas (mainstreaming),
  - developing standards and methodologies,

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the CoE Committee of Ministers on May 27<sup>th</sup> 2009

<sup>2</sup> The strategy can be found on [www.coe.int/children](http://www.coe.int/children)

- creating opportunities for dialogue between decision-makers and children, including access to decision- and policy-making structures and processes, and exchanging good practices.
- development of an inclusive approach, focused on schools, health-care systems, justice systems, residential care, families and also targeting particularly vulnerable children;
- empowerment of children by human rights education, by developing and disseminating information in a child-friendly language, in print and on the Internet

Bearing in mind these objectives, a Roadmap for Council of Europe actions on participation of children and young people under the age of 18 has been devised, and the work has started accordingly.

In order to mainstream children's participatory rights into the Council of Europe work on standard setting, monitoring and policy development, an inter-secretariat working group (KID-IN) was established in March 2009. A training course on participation rights and practice for Council of Europe administrators on how to consult children in specific Council of Europe activities was organised in June 2009.

One of the key elements to implement the objectives regarding child participation has been to underpin the work in the experiences of the youth policy sector in the Council of Europe, and with the involvement of its decision making and co-management structures<sup>3</sup>. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on child and youth participation (MJ-S-CYP) was established under the co-management structures<sup>4</sup> of the Directorate of Youth and Sport. According to the Terms of Reference adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the MJ-S-CYP is responsible for developing the work and the actions further.

The event presented in this paper launches the Council of Europe project on child participation, combining the first meeting of the ad hoc advisory group and a Round Table with a group of relevant stakeholders.

### **Objectives of the events**

#### **a) 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the MJ-S-CYP**

- To agree on rules of procedure and working methods for the Advisory group
- To set a timetable for the work
- To prepare a plan of action based on the Terms of Reference for the group

#### **b) Round Table discussion**

- To introduce the Roadmap 2009 – 2011 for Council of Europe actions on participation of children and young people under the age of 18, and in particular the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on child and youth participation (MJ-S-CYP);
- To exchange information on good practices and to seek advice and input from stakeholders for Council of Europe future actions on participation;

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<sup>3</sup> In addition to the strategy, the final Declaration of the 8<sup>th</sup> Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for youth "The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020" (Kiev October 2008), and the CoE Resolution (2008) 23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe determine the importance of co-operation and co-ordination between child- and youth-related activities.

<sup>4</sup> Steering committee of Youth (CDEJ), Advisory Council of Youth (CCJ) and Joint Council of Youth (CMJ)

- To create a network of experts, NGOs and other stakeholders on child and youth participation.

### **Dates and venue of the events:**

December 1 – 2 , 2009, Scandic Marina Congress Center, Helsinki, Finland

**Day 1 (1<sup>st</sup> December at 9 – 18)** The First meeting of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Child and Youth Participation (MJ-S-CYP); for MJ-S-CYP members and observers only.

**Day 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> December at 9 – 18)** A Round Table discussion to develop Council of Europe actions on participation of children and young people under the age of 18

- The Round Table is co-organised with the Ministry of Education, Finland
- Participants (by invitation only) include:
  - members of MJ-S-CYP
  - members of the Bureau of CMJ
  - Representatives of other Council of Europe bodies and institutions (PACE, Congress, HR Commissioner, relevant Steering Committees)
  - Representatives of Focal points
  - Representatives from UN Committee on CRC, CRIN, European Commission, FRA, ENOC, Unicef, SOS Children's Villages, ChildOnEurope, Eurochild (Thematic Working Group on child participation), Save the Children, Plan International/Europe, European Youth Forum; the invitation will be circulated through aforementioned networks to their members
  - Young participants will be invited through different networks
  - Council of Europe secretariat

Total of 50-70 participants

### **Organising team**

- Ms Maarit Kuikka, programme advisor, secretary to the MJ-S-CYP, Building a Europe for and with children, DG Social Cohesion
- Mr André-Jacques Dodin, head of division, secretary to the MJ-S-CYP , Division for Youth Policy Development Intergovernmental Co-operation and Statutory Bodies, Directorate of Youth and Sport/DG Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport
- Ms Fanny Voitzwinkler, project officer, Children's rights and family policies division, DG Social Cohesion
- Ms Michelle Bronner, Assistant to the head of division, Building a Europe for and with children (finances)
- Ms Sylvie Fritsch, Assistant, Directorate of Youth and Sport/DG Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport
- Ms Amaia Vetter, Assistant, Building a Europe for and with children